

# THE GATEWAY

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## SU and City resume U-Pass negotiations



ROSS PRUSAKOWSKI  
News Writer

After flying under the radar since the spring of 2004, the idea of a universal bus pass, or U-Pass, is soaring once again following a presentation by Edmonton City Councillor Kim Krushell to Students' Council last week.

The concept of a U-Pass at the University of Alberta has been floating around since 1998, with the last major action on it a referendum question put to students in March 2004. The referendum, with the support of 63 per cent of voters, approved the idea of a U-Pass with a maximum cost of \$60 per term—a cost far below what those in charge of the Edmonton Transit System (ETS) believe is feasible for the program to operate.

The presentation made to Students' Council last Tuesday by Krushell and Lorna Stewart from ETS reiterated this belief. Council was reminded that a fall 2001 survey jointly commissioned by the SU and ETS found that 70 per cent of students use some form of transit "regularly". With that level of ridership, ETS maintains that the operating costs of the program, with limited opt-outs, will be \$120 per student, per term.

PLEASE SEE U-PASS • PAGE 3

**WAITING FOR THE U-PASS** A year after the idea was approved in a referendum, the SU is working with the City to reach an agreement for student bus passes.

## U of A student boards 'Vomit Comit'

ANDREW RENFREE  
News Writer

While many university students spend the summer months working to fund their tuition for the upcoming year, University of Alberta MD/PhD student Jeeshan Chowdhury will spend two weeks in July defying gravity in a free-falling plane.

**"Parabolic flight is one of the only ways that humans can experience zero g, or weightlessness, without travelling into space."**

JEESHAN CHOWDHURY

Chowdhury will travel to Bordeaux, France with Ben Sanders from the University of Waterloo, Meghan Grant from McGill University, and Farron Blanc from Queen's University to participate in the European Space Agency's Student Parabolic Flight Campaign. The foursome, known as Team Synergy, will be the only Canadian team participating in the program alongside 29 teams from Europe.



NICK WISE

**DEFYING GRAVITY** Jeeshan Chowdhury is preparing for a nose-dive.

Parabolic flight may be a foreign term to most people, but the concept is simple. Chowdhury explains that the participants will board an Airbus A300 plane that will undergo a roller coaster-type manoeuvre starting with a steep climb and then going into a nose-dive. For a period of about 20 to 25 seconds between the climb and the nose-dive, the sum of all forces on the plane are equal to zero, and everyone on board experi-

ences weightlessness.

"Parabolic flight is one of the only ways that humans can experience zero g, or weightlessness, without travelling into space," said Chowdhury. "Usually, parabolic flight is reserved for astronauts who are in training. [but] the European Space Agency has offered an opportunity for students to apply to be able to conduct their own experiments."

PLEASE SEE ZERO GRAVITY • PAGE 3

## New University President takes office

CHLOÉ FEDO  
Deputy News Editor

As June rolled into July, the University of Alberta said goodbye to Dr Rod Fraser and welcomed its twelfth president, Dr Indira Samarasekera.

Beginning her term on Monday, 4 July, Dr Samarasekera said her foremost objective is to familiarize herself with the campus and meet as many people, especially students, as possible.

"I look at the opportunity to meet students as my first obligation. To meet them in groups, to welcome them in September and to inspire them about the possibilities for their futures: what they should be taking away from the University of Alberta, what they should be giving the University of Alberta and their fellow students," Samarasekera said.

"I see inspiring, engaging and connecting as being my first priority and then out of that interaction with students, faculty and staff—because, of course, without the faculty, the student won't have this wonderfully rich intellectual climate, and without the staff to support all the efforts, life on campus is not going to be particularly attractive."

**"[Dr Samarasekera] is definitely that energetic presence that this campus is looking for and she is not going to settle for second best. It's almost a question of whether we can keep up with her."**

GRAHAM LETTNER,  
STUDENTS' UNION PRESIDENT

Student's Union President Graham Lettner is welcoming the new leadership. He said that although Dr Fraser will be missed, Dr Samarasekera's energy and dedication to the University is going to be a positive change.

"[Dr Samarasekera] is definitely that energetic presence that this campus is looking for, and she is not going to settle for second best. It's almost a question of whether we can keep up with her," Lettner said.

PLEASE SEE PRESIDENT • PAGE 2

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## Mad about etiquette

MADtv's Ron Pederson is back at the Varscona playing the role of a social faux pas know-it-all.

A & E, PAGE 8



## One den to another

Bad news was good news for Golden Bears football fans after linebacker David Lowry was cut by the BC Lions.

SPORTS, PAGE 10

## THE GATEWAY

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## New president focused on students and int'l relations

Dr Samarasekera excited to be leading University, hopes to build on Dr Fraser's work

PRESIDENT • CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

"She is focused on students in a big way; she is focused on tying the University to the community; she is focused on a high level of quality construction on the campus. I think she is hitting all the right notes, and I think that everyone has the feeling that she can execute with the best of them," Lettner said.

"I think that the budget this year was very exciting. The province's 20-year vision about making Alberta a leader in learning, unleashing innovation and competing in the global marketplace is very key."

DR INDIRA SAMARASEKERA  
UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT

Dr Samarasekera also said she's intent on working with the provincial government and drawing on their focus on postsecondary education to make the U of A a world leader in education.

"Postsecondary education has increasingly been regarded by the province as an extremely important public good," Samarasekera said. "I think that the budget this year was very exciting. The province's 20-year vision about making Alberta a leader in learning, unleashing innovation and competing in the global marketplace is very key."

"In that context, I think Alberta postsecondary institutions will do what we need to do to make sure that every student who is qualified for postsecondary education has access to the space in Alberta and will not be held back for financial reasons," she continued.

Dr Samarasekera also hopes to draw on Dr Fraser's initiatives and maintain global ties with the world's universities, especially in the case of China. "Dr Fraser was visionary in identifying ten years ago that China was going to be an area of strategic importance in the world, and I think he positioned the University of Alberta very strategically with respect to that particularly important global partner."

"I think his efforts internationally are going to have a very long-lasting impact. My next challenge is to build on Dr Fraser's work," Samarasekera said. "I'm very excited to be here, very privileged."



FILE PHOTO: COSANNE PRESTON  
INTO THE PRESIDENT'S OFFICE Dr Samarasekera takes the reins at the U of A

## STREETERS

The sun is shining, the bees are buzzing, it's summer at last!

What the heck are you doing on campus?



Jessica Ho  
Computing  
Sciences IV



Adrienne  
Cartwright  
Arts IV



James Lai  
Business V



Steve Fraser  
Engineering IV

I'm working on campus. It seems like people are just hanging around. It's just too nice to be inside working. It's better to be outside having fun and throwing Frisbees.

I'm reading *Taming of the Shrew* for my Shakespeare class. I think it's air-conditioned in [SUB], so that helps.

I'm working in the office of the provost. I'm just outside killing time right now. I shouldn't say that in case they check the paper—that would be bad.

We're testing our soccer-playing robot. Eventually it will play soccer, for now it just kind of navigates around the ball. We can play keep-away with it. It's kind of fun when [the robot] chases the ball. We have a camera on the front that watches things.

Compiled and photographed by Chloé Fedio and Jake Troughton

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# SU hopes U of A will fund U-Pass

While some hope administration will contribute to higher cost of new U-Pass proposal, others think the money would be better spent elsewhere

U-PASS • CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Though the cost is more than students had anticipated, Krushell, the city councillor responsible for postsecondary issues, stressed that the City doesn't expect students to shoulder the whole of the operating costs. She said that the City will assist the SU in exploring other sources of funding for the program.

However, Krushell and the SU are already indicating that they plan on approaching the University administration to contribute funds to cover some of the operating costs of the U-Pass, most likely in the form of a levy on parking fees.

**"I think the fact that a city councillor is willing to come here and speak to us today shows that [the City] is serious about giving us the opportunity to pursue this."**

**GRAHAM LETTNER,  
STUDENTS' UNION PRESIDENT**

Getting the University administration on board to provide part of the funding for the program is something SU President Graham Lettner believes is vital to the implementation of the U-Pass.

"I think the fact that a city councillor is willing to come here and speak to us today shows that [the City] is serious about giving us the opportunity to pursue this. The University already knows it's on our radar, so it's just a question of getting all three sides together to come up with a solution," said Lettner.

"It's going to take collaboration between the University, students and the City to come up with a proposal that students will be amicable towards."

Despite the constructive and fact-filled presentation, there is concern among some councillors about the concept, costs and student response to a new, higher-priced U-Pass proposal.

"I don't think students will respond positively to another referendum, especially one at a higher price," said



MATT FRIEHR

**ARE YOU WILLING TO PAY?** The new U-Pass proposal is twice as expensive as the amount proposed in the 2004 referendum.

Law Councillor Kyle Kawanami. "Those students that are still around from the last time we had a referendum on this issue will think, 'We've already voted on this.'"

"If we're lobbying the University for money, there are a lot of areas I could see them putting money into that would be of greater benefit to students than bus passes."

Krushell noted that the City is unwilling to pay any of the operating costs of the U-Pass and wants the program to remain revenue neutral. However, due to the increased ridership that the implementation of a U-Pass is likely to cause, the City will have to shoulder the increased capital costs of new buses out of its own pocket.

"The City itself is going to absorb the capital costs, which are not insignificant when you consider that one low-floor bus is about \$750,000 and I'm going to be asking the city to purchase 18 of them [to meet the expected demand]," said Krushell.

"If students want a U-Pass, they're going to have to absorb the operating costs. We'll look at the capital and also help lobby in the efforts [to get funding for the U-Pass] with the University administration."

While there is no formal agreement between the City and the Students' Union, the mandate of the previous referendum doesn't expire until 1 May, 2006, making the earliest possible date to implement the new plan sometime in 2007.

# Student excited about defying gravity

Team will use Jarome Iginla's helmet to study effects of zero g on vision

ZERO GRAVITY • CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Team Synergy, who met at the International Astronautical Congress last October, will be conducting experiments to see if an increase in pressure in the eye during microgravity will result in a narrowing of the visual field and a reduction in vision.

"Your entire body is designed to fight gravity, so even in a short time with parabolic flight, the rush of fluid to the head is so strong that you actually get an increase of pressure on the eyeball," Chowdhury said.

"We hypothesize that because of the increased pressure in the eye, there will be a reduction in the visual field."

The team will conduct their experiment in true Canadian fashion, using a hockey helmet donated to them by Calgary Flames star Jarome Iginla. Several LED lights are mounted on

the inside of the helmet to gauge peripheral vision before and during weightlessness.

**"We just went to West Edmonton Mall and rode the Mindbender a couple of times, and the Drop of Doom—and didn't get sick."**

**JEESHAN CHOWDHURY,  
ON PREPARING FOR HIS FLIGHT**

When the data is compiled, Team Synergy will present their findings at the upcoming International Astronautical Congress, to be held in Japan this October.

While they were finishing their equipment in late June, Chowdhury and his team were wondering how they could prepare for the ride of their lives, which is nicknamed the "Vomit Comet."

"We just went to West Edmonton Mall and rode the Mindbender a couple of times, and the Drop of Doom—and didn't get sick," said Chowdhury, adding that you can't predict who's going to be sick during parabolic flight.

"I don't have a history of motion sickness, so hopefully that helps me out."

Despite the risk of sickness, Chowdhury said that he is excited about this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

"I'm really looking forward to this and I'm going to be pretty proud to fly with the University of Alberta crest on my shoulder."

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**THE GATEWAY**



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# Violence against Aboriginal women a problem in Canada: Amnesty

School of Native studies creates new class for 2006 to address the often overlooked issues faced by Aboriginal women

KAILA SIMONEAU  
News Writer

There are many countries around the world that are known for their human rights violations, but it's often thought that Canada is nowhere near being one of them. However, according to a recent Amnesty International report, Canada has a few things it needs to address before it truly becomes the free nation many believe it to be.

The report, which covers events from January to December of 2004, highlighted several concerns including the use of Tasers by police, refugee protection and the inquiry into the deportation to Syria and subsequent torture of Maher Arar. At the top of the list, however, was the disproportionately high incidence of violence against Aboriginal women.

"It was about time," said Nathalie Kermol, professeur adjointe for faculté Saint-Jean and the school of Native studies.

"It took that [report] in order for people to realize that there is a problem in Canada and that Canada is not a super-wonderful country; there are many problems and many issues [here]."

Val Napoleon, an assistant professor for the school of Native studies and the faculty of law, agrees that there is a lack of awareness about violence against Aboriginal women in Canada.

"I don't know what that says about the Canadian consciousness. There is something about an ongoing collective amnesia when it comes to Aboriginal women that does not appreciate the loss of humanity [involved in the abuse]," Napoleon said.

The women are now working towards addressing that issue in the form of a new class to be offered in the winter semester of 2006. The course, offered through the school of Native studies, will focus specifically on the issues faced by Aboriginal women throughout Canadian history. Now that there is more attention being drawn to these issues, Kermol believes there is enough interest to go forward with the class.

**"The reality of the violence against women has been experiencing is a part of a world that we have created: what are the conditions in this world that allow some people to be disposable?"**

VAL NAPOLEON  
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR,  
NATIVE STUDIES

"I think that education is really important, that by talking about these issues, you start to make a difference," said Kermol.

Napoleon also emphasized the importance of stimulating discussion about the issue in order to foster positive change.

"Aboriginal women have not been a main focus of an academic pro-

gram and what we hope to do over the next few years is to make that a strong project of Native studies," said Napoleon.

According to Amnesty, Aboriginal women are at a much greater risk of being socially and economically marginalized in Canada, therefore leading to an increased risk of becoming a victim of both physical and sexual crimes. The organization feels that both provincial and federal governments have not taken the steps necessary to decrease this marginalization and ensure that indigenous women and girls are protected from these crimes.

Ellen Bielawski, dean of the school of Native studies, agrees with Amnesty's assessment of the situation.

"[It is] conditions of poverty and racism that leave people with so few options that they need to work the streets," Bielawski said. Kermol expanded on the point.

"[What has been noticed] is that near the end of the month, as the cheques start to run out, the number of the women on the streets go up: these are women who are supporting families. That is part of the reality."

Furthermore, Napoleon said that the issue stretches beyond the realm of politics, affecting mainstream social thought in Canada. She argued that a broader conversation on the issue should be encouraged and should focus on the reasons why violence against indigenous women has become an accepted part of Canadian society.

"The reality of the violence against women has been experiencing is a part of a world that we have



TAKING A DEEPER LOOK Ellen Bielawski talks about violence.

MICHAEL LIU

created: what are the conditions in this world that allow some people to be disposable?" asked Napoleon.

Bielawski believes that the government must first make a long-term commitment to combating this issue before

the cycle of violence can be broken.

"We need to make that generational investment. We can't go through ten months of public funding to get women off the streets and expect it to work."



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## SUMMER COUNCIL FORUM

Compiled by Ross Prusakowski

Students' Council meets every second Tuesday in the Council Chambers in University Hall at 6pm. Council meetings are open to all students. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, 12 July.

### COUNCIL MAKES QUORUM, QUICKLY REDUCES IT

With the combination of the close of the spring term, beautiful weather and work commitments conspiring to keep Students' Council from meeting quorum requirements at its previous meeting, Council took no chances for their second meeting in June. As soon as enough voting members had arrived, Council quickly gave second and final reading to a bill intended to lower quorum. Under the new rules, only half the number of seats that are currently filled—which, as of now, is 19—need to be in attendance for legislation to be legally passed, rather than half of the total seats.

After a presentation regarding the revitalized proposal of a universal bus pass (see story on page 1) Council continued to slog away with motions and legislation that dealt primarily with internal reform regarding governance and eligibility of members to serve on Students' Council.

### TOBACCO LEGISLATION SNUFFED OUT

Arguably the most controversial motion facing Council—that the Students' Union halt the sale of tobacco products—slipped quietly off the order paper. This was a result of the absence of its mover, Science Council Stephen Kirkham, due to a summer internship, and the failure of any other councillor to champion the bill in his absence. Getting another mover for the bill was impeded by the fact that the majority of councillors were confused as to what motion they were dealing with due to post-recess commotion and speaker Greg Harlow's failure to read the entirety of the motion out loud.

### A QUESTION OF NOMINATIONS

With the removal of the tobacco bill from the docket, it didn't take long for a new bill to assume the title of most controversial. A point of contention arose over the elimination of signature nomination requirements for open studies seats in Students' Council or General Facilities Council elections.

There was a flurry of debate regarding the necessity and value of nomination signatures for all faculties and much hand-wringing by some members over the consequences of the bill. In the end, however, many councillors seemed persuaded that, while getting ten nomination signatures to contest a Council seat is not a barrier for students in any other faculty, it is for open studies students, and the bill passed by a comfortable margin in its first reading.

### AN OFFICERS DUEL

Perhaps the most memorable moment of the debate came when Chief Returning Officer (CRO) Rachel Woyonowski argued against the adoption of the legislation. After council passed the bill, Woyonowski chose to take the floor and declared that she wished to have her opposition to the bill entered on the record and that, despite her opposition to the bill, she would still follow Council's command.

This comment resulted in a sharp rebuke from the speaker, who reminded the CRO that, like him, Woyonowski is an officer of Council and always beholden to its decisions, regardless of her personal feelings on the matter, and suggested that she should be appreciative that they provided her with an opportunity to take part in the debate prior to the vote.

### COCA-COLA QUOTA

In the previous meeting that failed to reach quorum, Vice-President (Operations and Finance) Jason Tobias, in a response to a question during question period, informed Council it was likely that the University would fail to meet its quota for sales of Coke products. Tobias said this would likely result in the extension of the single source beverage agreement for an additional year with no extra money given to the SU or University by Coke, as provided for under the current contract.

# OPINION

opinion@gatewaywest.com • Thursday, July 10, 2005

## Conservatives need to accept gay marriage

ON TUESDAY, 28 JUNE—just a few steps behind the Netherlands and Belgium—Canada became the third country in the world to legalize same-sex marriage, passing legislation through the House of Commons in a 158-133 vote. Just days later, on 30 June, the traditionally Roman Catholic Spain became the world's fourth country to extend marriage rights to homosexual couples. Despite this progressive trend towards equality, some Canadians are not ready to give up the battle against this new-fangled definition of marriage.

Prior to the vote on Tuesday, Liberal minister Joe Comuzzi resigned from cabinet in order to vote against the proposition upheld by his party, bringing the question of whether or not cabinet ministers should be given a free vote, at least in the mind of Conservative Leader Stephen Harper. Harper has said that if his party forms the next government, the law will be revisited, only this time he would hold a free vote for all MPs—including cabinet ministers.

Generally, votes in the House of Commons are organized along party lines. In the rare instances where free votes are allowed, cabinet members are expected to vote in accordance with the executive, after all, to defeat a government is also to defeat its cabinet. Harper's argument that free votes should be granted to cabinet members is counterproductive to the very purpose of government under the Canadian system.

That's not to say that parliamentary reform is not a current issue in politics: there have been significant and valid criticisms made to the parliamentary system. But to suggest such a radical variance from traditional governmental practices seems like another inadequate criticism of the same-sex marriage vote, especially for a party that is so concerned about preserving the traditional definition of marriage. It seems like an easy promise to make for a man like Harper, who has never been at the helm of the executive, or even part of a federal cabinet. Perhaps Harper doesn't understand the Canadian parliamentary system, or hopes that the Canadian mainstream population will be easily fooled.

Harper also stated that the passing of the bill lacked legitimacy because it relied on the support of the Bloc Québécois, a separatist party that doesn't reflect the beliefs or desires of most Canadians. By singling out Quebec and de-legitimizing their participation in the debate, Harper is once again indicating that he is not ready to be prime minister of Canada.

So Harper seems like an idiot, but it's not only the federal Conservatives that are causing a ruckus. As a leader in opposing the same-sex marriage bill, Premier Ralph Klein refuses to give up the battle of protecting the traditional definition of marriage in Alberta; however, since marriage falls under federal jurisdiction, there is little he can do. Klein has suggested that the province of Alberta only perform civil unions, leaving marriage to religious orders and withdrawing from sanctioning marriages altogether—a move that would make Alberta unlike any other province in the country.

It seems kind of futile to try to prevent the yielding of a right that is already in effect in the vast majority of the country. The Conservatives, both federal and provincial, are trying too hard to prevent society from accepting homosexuals into mainstream society. It's time for them to join the rest of their country and accept that citizens should be granted the same marriage rights, regardless of their sexual preference.

CHLOÉ FIDIO  
Deputy News Editor

## Get it together Council

OVER THE LAST FEW DAYS, I was saddened to learn that Students' Council's debate over the issue of SU tobacco sales was cut short because many councillors weren't paying attention during the meeting, and the motion couldn't find a second.

While some have said speaker Greg Harlow should have made a greater effort to grab the attention of Council, it isn't his job to baby-sit errant councillors. This was an important issue, and an important debate that Council needed to have on its own philosophical policies. The fact that it isn't being talked about because certain councillors were disorganized is unacceptable.

DANIEL KASZOR  
Editor-in-Chief



## LETTERS

### Know where SU's money comes from, goes

In response to Stephen Bellaby's 12 May letter ("Close the 'Plant for summer, SU'"), I find it very unlucky that most students do not realize where their money is going. As long as students do not understand or take an interest in the actions of an organization in which they are the key—indeed, the only—shareholder, the SU has not completely succeeded in serving students in ways that most students need.

As anyone who has tried to navigate the several hundred pages of the SU budget can tell, understanding where and how the SU spends money is a laborious process. However, it may be of some comfort to Mr Bellaby that the entirety of his SU fees are not being consumed merely funding the "Plant." Of the SU's approximately \$9 million gross operating revenues, only about 15 per cent is funded directly by student fees. The rest comes from revenues generated by SU businesses.

There is a point to be raised in response to Mr Bellaby's reproach to the Powerplant's summer operations. His position is a reasonable one, and indeed, a position that I myself have considered in the past. The rationale for continual summer operation is based on two immovable costs, rent and managerial staff salaries. As the SU pays rent whether the "Plant" is open or closed, and managerial staff are employed year-round, leaving the "Plant" open during the summer is an attempt

to mitigate the losses that would be incurred if the "Plant" were mothballed every May.

One could reasonably ask if this is an effective strategy, and that is indeed the very question that the staff and I have been asking in an attempt to return the Powerplant to a profitable financial position.

JASON TORIAS  
VP (Operations/Finance)  
Students' Union

### Political cartoon 'disturbing'

Though I normally enjoy your political cartoons, as someone who is devoted to preventing the encroachment of urban areas on natural spaces, especially in our natural parks, I have to admit that the 9 June cartoon disturbed me. The comic depicted a person lying behind a bush with a bear standing overhead, presumably implying the person had been attacked by the bear, which is offensive enough, given the recent bear attacks that have taken place in Banff.

Far worse, though, the cartoon also depicts environmental protesters, with the bear wearing a sign with a peace sign on it and saying, "What?" The idea that protesting the destruction of natural grounds is somehow equitable with bear attacks, in which people have died, is ridiculous. The fact that the cartoonist sees some connection between peaceful protest and violent animal attacks is disturbing, to say the least.

Protesters such as myself are looking to preserve nature, and not that of preservation would no doubt

include less animal attacks, due to humanity's reduced presence in natural habitats and, it should be noted, are peaceful. To equate bear attacks with attempting to preserve nature is offensive, to say nothing of harmful to the peaceful aims of those concerned with the environment.

NANCY KOULE  
AgForU

### Blame the people who read the papers, Berry

I couldn't agree more with David Berry's assessment of Edmonton's two local newspapers in the 9 June Burp Sack, but I think he's missing the bigger picture. Yes, the papers are becoming pandering, but Mr Berry, there's someone they're pandering to.

It's easy to blame the medium, but if people weren't so easily duped into buying tripe, they wouldn't be fed it so readily. It's true that media, well beyond our own little city, has started to decline, but if people expected more than infographics and punditry from news sources, they would get more. Unfortunately for people who seek out good news, it seems as though the majority of people prefer flashiness and style over substance and depth, which probably means we're going to be getting nothing but trashy headlines and exploitative pictures for the next while. Still, you can't blame a populist media for giving the audience what it wants, Mr Berry.

STEVE SINCLAIRE  
Arts IV

### Episode III totally wasn't terrible, Wong

After reading the letters page of the most recent issue of the Gateway (9 June), I was shocked to see a letter from science student Francis Wong denouncing the review of *Revenge of the Sith* by Mike Larocque and Daniel Kaszor ("The Power of the Dark Side," 26 May).

Now, one can question how smart anyone can be angrily questioning anyone's opinion of a movie (it is their opinion after all), but in this case one must protest further because of his salacious claims about the film itself.

Wong criticizes Lucas for implying relationships instead of showing them. I have news for you Francis, that's called subtlety. Wong also goes on to state that the scene with Darth Vader's rise was a blight on cinema, and I have to ask would an entire internet subculture spring up around something that was unintentionally funny? I think not. Francis Wong, you should get better opinions before criticizing those of others.

JOHN ROSE LISKER  
Arts I

Letters to the editor should be e-mailed to [gateway@gatewaywest.com](mailto:gateway@gatewaywest.com). The Gateway reserves the right to edit letters for length and clarity, and to refuse publication of any letter it deems racist, sexist, libelous or otherwise hateful in nature.

Letters to the editor should be 350 words or maximum, and include the name, student identification number, program, and year of study of the author. Anonymous submissions will not be considered for publication.

## THE GATEWAY

The Gateway is looking for a few good volunteer artists and designers to help our paper look pretty.

We require those with the visual talents for **illustrations** to run with our fine articles, ranging from political cartoons to feature graphics.

Interested? Please contact:  
Iris Tse, Design & Production Editor  
at [production@gateway.ualberta.ca](mailto:production@gateway.ualberta.ca)

# Canada has become a loser nation



SCOTT C. BOURGEOIS

I love my country. With Canada Day come and gone, though, I can't help but find myself getting a little introspective towards this land of mine. And I have to admit, I don't like what I see.

Canada is no longer a great nation. We're a loser nation. If the world were high school, Canada would be the lame kid who hangs out with all the popular girls, while they all make fun of her to her face. The popular kids—especially that America—tell Canada to do crazy things to help “make her cool,” then laugh at her when she tries to do them.

Canada is spineless, you see. She's so afraid of getting ostracized by her “friends” that she lets them walk all over her. Deep down, she knows they think she's a loser, but she refuses to wake up and really see that. She thinks she needs jerks like them, and she's afraid to lose them.

Worse still, Canada doesn't actually like kids like America. Sure, America's popular, but she's a cruel bitch, and Canada knows it. Canada tries hard to let other kids know that she's not like that, but she's so desperate to be popular that she just turns around and does whatever America asks of her.

Oh, she'll get bold when the popular kids aren't around. You should

“Canada is spineless, you see. She's so afraid of getting ostracized by her ‘friends’ that she lets them walk all over her. Deep down, she knows they think she's a loser, but she refuses to wake up and really see that. She thinks she needs jerks like them, and she's afraid to lose them.”

see what Canada says about America behind her back, to the other loser kids who're jealous of the fact that she gets to hang out with America. If America ever hears the things Canada has to say, though, America pushes Canada around until Canada awkwardly takes back whatever she said. Then the popular kids all laugh at her and walk away, and Canada laughs too and hurries up to follow them.

Canada has a reputation, too: the reputation is that she's a drunken airhead. She got that reputation at one of the parties she “accidentally didn't get invited to.” Canada got sloshed on punch and made an ass of herself, then got sick in Britain's car on the way home. She doesn't do anything to change that stereotype, though, because it's all she's got and she's too afraid to lose it.

Despite the airhead reputation, Canada isn't stupid. America kind of is though, so Canada pretends she's stupid, because, obviously, that's the way the popular kids are. America has dumb answers to questions, and tends to believe her father—a southern Baptist—over things like “facts” and “reason.”

Canada tries to give advice to America from time to time, but America doesn't want to hear it

because she thinks she's smarter than Canada. Is. Then she laughs at Canada.

They steal from her, too. Canada knows it. America and the other popular kids steal everything from her money to pieces of her lunch. The first few times Canada called them on it, but they called it the price of being cool. Now, Canada just turns a blind eye to it and worries about how hungry she'll be until dinner time.

She does have real friends. There're a few kids in the school who respect her, and even wish they were as pretty and nice as she was, but Canada turns her back on them to be like America. The other kids watch in dismay, because they see the assholes for what they are and they know that, deep down, Canada really is a nice kid—really, they all wish she'd just act like herself.

Feel sorry for her? I do. Especially considering this is our national identity. I love my country all the same, though, which is why I think it's high time for a change. We've turned 138 this year, so maybe it's finally time to grow up and be ourselves. At the very least, we could go through a sudden, angsty phase. It would be directly next to be goth Canada; at least we wouldn't be America's bitch anymore.

## Let's hope the new president gets it right

Connection with students, support for arts desperately needed at the U of A



ROSS PRUSAKOWSKI

across the stage to get their degrees. Fraser's aloof attitude towards interacting with undergrads has seeped throughout the University, numbing the connection with students.

If, at the very least, Samarssekera can prove that she actually knows what a typical student looks like and has some idea of what their concerns are, she could dissipate this looming cloud and begin to rebuild some connection with the students. Because, really, it's that connection and sense of community that can vastly improve the atmosphere around campus.

**Rod Fraser's detachment from campus life will stick to the shoes of students and faculty like errant dog feces unless Samarssekera breaks the shell surrounding the presidential position.**

The other major tide Samarssekera needs to turn is the uneven balance of funding flooding into the University. While Fraser's term was a godsend if you happened to be a researcher or engineering student, for the majority of undergrads—especially those in arts—the only major advancements that occurred during Rod's reign came from the banks in the form of the astronomical student loans an ever-increasing number of graduates are saddled with.

Though it's a promising sign that Samarssekera has repeatedly singled out reinvestment in the humanities, social sciences and fine arts since her hiring—and has made refurbishing perhaps the most-neglected faculty under Fraser a priority—students and faculty should not be content with words. With the new Centennial Centre for Interdisciplinary Sciences soon to be rising from the rubble of V-wing, and the handful of new engineering buildings, arts will be the only large facility receiving no additional room to grow to meet increasing enrollment, meaning it will continue to educate almost all of its students in the same antiquated buildings it's used for some time.

Even if expecting new buildings to spring up on the east side of campus may be unrealistic, arts students should expect a new president to bring some energy and commitment to fundraising for the arts. In the long term, it's only a monetary form of commitment that will rejuvenate the faculty and improve the student experience significantly. However, to make a difference in the immediate future, Samarssekera must only ensure that the few remaining reading rooms in the faculty can be spared closure and remain places for discourse and education beyond the classroom.

While there are undoubtedly other challenges and changes that await Samarssekera as she settles in at the helm of the University, addressing the lingering hangover from the Fraser attitude towards students and the arts are paramount. How she handles these issues will unquestionably alter how students feel about the U of A; as students, we can only hope that she does a better job than her predecessor.

## Where would you rather be studying next winter: Alberta or Tuscany?

When you attend the U of A campus in Cortona, Italy, you'll be taught by U of A instructors teaching U of A credit courses.

- Classes taught in English
- Scholarships available

Information for Cortona 2006 can be found at the **Faculty of Arts Undergraduate Student Services Office, 6-7 Humanities Centre, University of Alberta.**

Please contact:  
[cortona@ualberta.ca](mailto:cortona@ualberta.ca)  
Phone: (780) 492-6292 or 492-7611



[www.uofaweb.ualberta.ca/arts/cortona.cfm](http://www.uofaweb.ualberta.ca/arts/cortona.cfm)

APPLICATION DEADLINE: OCTOBER 21, 2005

**What is it:**

A River City rendition of the fair, Klondike Days is Edmonton's barely audible answer to Calgary's world-famous Stampede. For ten days, Edmonton pays tribute to its gold rush past—yes, the gold rush actually happened in the Yukon, and most people didn't take the Edmonton route to get there, but we don't have a lot of history, and council still hasn't approved my idea for "Oilers' Dynasty Days"—with a parade, carnies, corn dogs and amusement park rides. There's

also a line-up of musicians—free to see with admission—including Shawn Desman, Matt Good, Finger Eleven and, most awesomely, Twisted Sister on 29 July.

**When is it:** Thursday, 21 July to Saturday, 30 July

**Where is it:** Northlands Park (the Coliseum stop on the LRT line)

**Cost:** \$8 for general admission, then varying after that, depending on what you want to do. You can buy an unlimited ride pass, which includes admission, for \$30 at any Ticketmaster, Sobey's/IGA or 7-Eleven.

**Best part:** The childhood nostalgia of eating an entire bag of cotton candy before riding the roller coaster, vomiting it up in the garbage can immediately afterwards, then cleansing your palate with \$4 root beer and mini donuts and heading for the Gravitron.

**Worst part:** Carnies.

**What is it:** Technically

an offshoot of Klondike Days, A

Taste of Edmonton gathers 42 Edmonton

restaurants into one place for a literal buffet of

some of our city's best food. From chain restaurants like

Earls to the Hotel MacDonald, almost the entire rainbow of

Edmontonian food is at your fingertips.

**When is it:** Thursday, 21 July to Sunday, 30 July

**Where is it:** Sir Winston Churchill Square

**Cost:** Theoretically,

you could just walk

around and smell every-

thing for free, but if you

want to eat, a sheet of 30 tickets will cost you \$20.25 in advance (check

Tix on the Square) or \$22.50 once the festival starts. Food dishes range

in ticket cost, though the average is about four per dish.

**Best part:** Anything buffalo, usually, though anything with the

word "stuffed" in the name is a close second.

**Worst part:** It's deceptively expensive—two people

can make 30 tickets disappear with about as

much as food as your average appetizer, if

you're not careful.

**What is it:** For four

days, a collection of roots-oriented

musictypes crowd the Edmonton Sky Club's

bare hills, baking themselves in the sun and pleas-

ing that small part inside of all of us that wishes we could

have been at Woodstock. Well, sort of. Past

performers have included Grammy-winner

Norah Jones and David Byrne of The Talking

Heads, and this year's line-up features, among

others, Ryan Adams, Martha Wainwright, Steve Earle, Alison Krauss and

The Weckertians.

**When is it:** Thursday, 4 August to Sunday, 7 August

**Where is it:** The Edmonton Sky Club, right beside the Muttart

Conservatory, below Connors Hill

**Cost:** Adult four-day passes would be \$130, but they've been

sold out for a while now. Individual evening passes are \$40

each, though Sunday's are almost gone as well, so hurry if

you want to get in on the folkie action.

**Best part:** Having a "smoke" with the sun on

your shoulders and music in your ear.

**Worst part:** Hippies, man, the

fuckin' hippies.

**What is it:**

Edmonton's chance to show

that we're doing our part for multicultur-

alism. Every ethnic group with more than a dozen

representatives in the city gets together and provides

a pavilion exploring their own culture, with everything

from traditional dances and artworks to history lessons and, of

course, food, glorious ethnic food.

**When is it:** The August long week-

end (Saturday, 30 July to Monday, 1

August)

**Where is it:** William Hawrelak Park

**Cost:** It's free to walk around and take in the ambience, but if you

want food (and you should), it's distributed via ticket system; tickets

cost \$5 for every six (food items go for varying amounts of tickets).

**Best part:** Washing down perogies with Thai curry, then

washing that down with burritos, then washing that down

with Belgian chocolate, then...

**Worst part:** Despite the ethnic nature, most

patrons frown on Roman-style feasting

and purging.

**What is it:** A collection

of jugglers, comedians, acrobats,

clowns, musicians and freaks from around

the world that make that dude who plays Motley

Crue covers on Why? Ave look like the two-bit hack he

is. It's the one chance Edmonton's streets get to look like

they're important enough to have people creatively asking for

money.

**When is it:** Friday, 8 July to

Sunday, 17 July

**Where is it:** Sir Winston

Churchill Square, though certain of the more creative performers will

wander throughout downtown making office people look stupid.

**Cost:** As much or as little as you want—they pass around the

hat at the end of the show.

**Best part:** It's absolutely amazing what some people can

do given a slab of sidewalk and an audience.

**Worst part:** A lot of clowns. Clowns are

funny and all that, but they're funny

because they humiliate people;

most people don't like to be

humiliated.

**Street Performer's Festival**

photo by Nick Wiebe

feature by David Berry

# Lazy, Hazy, Crazy Days of Summer

Summer. Edmonton. For two months, we can actually join the rest of the world outdoors, and when we get the chance we make the most of it. Without further adieu, then, the Gateway presents you with a guide to fun in the Edmonton sun, outdoor-festival style

**Folk Festival****The Fringe****What is it:** North

America's largest fringe theatre fes-

tival. This one is pretty much the granddaddy

of Edmonton's festival circuit, and a large reason why

Edmonton tries to bill itself as "The Festival City". Theatre-

types from every latitude and longitude

gather here for nine days of comedy, drama,

dramedy, one-man shows, musicals and, above

all, beer tents.

**When is it:** Friday, 19 August to Sunday, 28 August

**Where is it:** In and around Old Strathcona, essentially centred around

Gazabo Park, with a number of venues, ranging from actual theatres to con-

verted bars and outdoor spaces.

**Cost:** Varies, but nothing over \$13 in advance. Tickets go on sale one

week before the festival starts.

**Best part:** A number of Edmonton's—and, for that matter,

Canada's—biggest and best playwrights, actors and directors have got

their start here, and there's always a bevy of fantastic theatre to be

had for relatively cheap.

**Worst part:** Festival organizers hand spots out ran-

domly, not by merit, so for all the good, there are a

lot of unconsciously shitty plays out there.

Try to read the reviews before you

see anything.





## Making music while contemplating cannibalism

The Agnostic Mountain Gospel Choir had a tough time creating their second album. Not because of any musical lapses, but because it was freakin' cold in their studio

**Agnostic Mountain Gospel Choir**  
CD release party  
with Creaking Tree String Quartet and Stagger Lee Shedden  
Tuesday, 12 July  
Sidetrack Café

**DAVE BERRY**  
Managing Editor

Though the Agnostic Mountain Gospel Choir doesn't actually have any religious overtones to speak of, it wouldn't come as a surprise if the Calgary foursome started believing in the Lucifer after their latest recording experience.

**"The room sounds really good, but we couldn't really keep the main heater going because it was too loud, and every time we brought in space heaters, they would pop breakers. It was like the Franklin Expedition, you know what I mean? We were freezing and ready to eat each other alive."**

**VLAD SOBOLEWSKI,**  
**AGNOSTIC MOUNTAIN GOSPEL CHOIR**

The band, made up of singer/guitarist Bob Keelaghan, banjoist Judd Palmer, stand-up bass player Vlad Sobolewski, and drummer Jay Woolley, got together during a hellacious cold snap this past January to record *Fighting and Onions*, the follow-up to their award-winning debut, *St. Hubert*. Now, a band recording during inclement weather isn't really much to write home about, unless their studio happens to be a converted shack near the railroad tracks without a lot of insulation or heating.

"The whole building is insulated with horsehair, and in the middle of January, we had the cold snap, and it turned into a brutal

recording session," explains Sobolewski over the phone from his Calgary home. "The room sounds really good, but we couldn't really keep the main heater going, because it was too loud, and every time we brought in space heaters, they would pop breakers. It was like the Franklin Expedition, you know what I mean? We were freezing and ready to eat each other alive."

"We were all right though," he adds. "Near the end, we were a bit more tense than last time—when we recorded *St. Hubert* we had a bit more of a comfortable environment—but we were all right on the whole."

And besides, according to Sobolewski, there was definitely one good thing that came out of an atmosphere so cold all they could do was play a mixture of folk and gut-bucket blues and contemplate cannibalism.

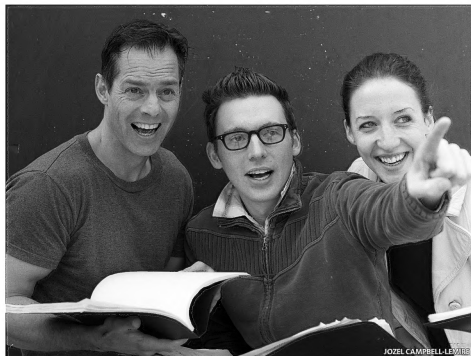
"I think maybe that some of that some of the misery came through on the recording—the despair of it all," he says with a laugh.

Despair, after all, is something that certainly helps when you're playing the blues. And, as Sobolewski adds, moving into a rawer, more bluesy direction is something the band is doing with *Fighting and Onions*, whether it's the fault of the cold or not.

"I think maybe *St. Hubert* was a bit, I don't know, purer? You know what I mean?" he says tentatively. "We're kind of, sort of—well, I don't want to say it's slower, but it's definitely more moody stuff. Maybe we're getting a bit darker, a bit more bombastic."

Bombastic is a bit of an odd way to describe a stripped-down roots outfit that records in frozen shacks, but as Sobolewski explains, it's about finding something closer to the beginning of blues.

"I think we're all getting a lot more comfortable with what we're doing, so we can take some more liberties with what we're doing," he explains. "That type of music—like, the old blues and stuff—was really punk of its time; it was really dangerous and forbidden, and I think we're pulling more from that. It was guttural, and guys ate their shoes and slept on their guitars and things like that. I think that's where we're taking it from."



## Acting calmly while getting soaking wet

In his first try at making a true farce, Edmonton standby Stewart Lemoine makes sure that his characters hide in closets, doff their clothes and get soaking wet

**A Grand Time in the Rapids**  
Written and Directed by Stewart Lemoine  
Running from Thursday, 7 July to Saturday, 23 July  
Vancouver Theatre

**CHLOE PEDRO**  
Deputy News Editor

While some plays thrive on challenging conventional expectations, *A Grand Time in the Rapids*, the newest effort by local playwright/director Stewart Lemoine, deals with the delicate use of proper etiquette in difficult social situations. Jeff Haslam, Belinda Cornish and Ron Pedersen—the cast of this farce set in Grand Rapids, Michigan—are all too eager to explain.

"What do you do when your clothes are covered in water and you are in someone else's home? You don't want to go into their bedroom to change," says Haslam.

Well, at least not in 1959, when the story takes place. The play features Thalia Cumberland (Cornish), an attractive widow who, despite the prudish nature of the times, is at ease with the idea of kissing Boyd Mayhew (Haslam), her gentleman caller in the production.

Kissing aside, Cumberland is concerned about a secret she is hiding from Mayhew, so she hires etiquette specialist Ted Todd (Pedersen) to help her properly reveal it. The cast is tight-lipped about the secret, but they are sure that it will be worth the wait for the audience.

"We can't really tell you the secret, but it might make you want to come to the play again," teases Pedersen. "I think this is one of those plays that I would definitely want to see another time because it is so dependent on following where characters are hidden and where people's clothes are; we all end up without our own clothes. We're all in towels because everybody gets soaking wet, and we're all dashing about at a rapid pace, if you will."

The play is produced by a Teatro La Quindimex, a theatre company Lemoine founded in 1982 devoted to creating new live works to be performed by a resident ensemble of actors all year round at Edmonton's Vancouver Theatre.

Pederson, who recently finished his third season as a regular cast member on *MADtv*, says

that although Edmonton is a far cry from the glitz and glamour of Los Angeles, it has a unique charm and devotion to theatre that is uncommon of the big American city.

"The best of LA is not really the best of anywhere," jokes Pedersen. "What am I trying to say? I like it in Edmonton."

"We all feel very of lucky when [Lemoine] writes parts for us. Not a lot of actors get that," admits Pedersen. "When I'm doing sketch comedy, I feel like a lot of muscles start to atrophy, because it doesn't require me to use them. It doesn't engage my heart as an actor. I'm from the stage; I'm from a place where we tell stories over two hours, three hours. Being that focused and finding yourself inside these stories is an epic medium. Whenever [Lemoine] calls, I'm on my way."

**"We all end up without our own towels because everybody gets soaking wet."**

**RON PEDERSEN,**  
**ACTOR IN A GRAND TIME IN THE RAPIDS**

Haslam has been performing with the company—whose repertoire consists almost exclusively of original works written by Lemoine—since 1988.

"As soon as I first saw a play of Stewart's, I thought, 'Wow, people do new plays in Edmonton!'" recalls Haslam. "As I was here a little longer I realized that not only do they do new plays, but it's a real centre in Canada to work on plays. And especially working with [Lemoine], I got a chance to do new comedies."

*A Grand Time in the Rapids* is a play that fits the standard comic mould, with characters jumping over furniture and rumbling on the ground.

"It's got all the trappings of a classical farce: it has four doors and people hiding. It's all in the timing, this one," says Pedersen. "It's [Lemoine's] first real farce, and it takes place in real time, so we're seeing him doing something kind of new. We're all going to be having a riot on stage."





## War ridiculous, but enjoyable

### War of the Worlds

*Directed by Steven Spielberg*

Starring Tom Cruise, Dakota Fanning  
Now Showing

**MIKE LAROCQUE**  
Entertainment Editor

Entertainment Editor

The most apparent thing about *War of the Worlds* is that it cost \$128 million to make. Sure, there are likely more interesting ways to open a movie review, but after seeing *War of the Worlds*, not only are you going to be sure that Steven Spielberg wanted you to know just how goddamn huge his budget was, but you're going to be convinced that there isn't a cent of it left.

The film centres on Ray Ferrier (Tom Cruise), a dock worker and father of two who has been, up to this point, a fairly lousy parent. When mysterious bolts of lightning trigger an alien invasion, Ray must escape with his kids or face certain destruction from the mysterious three-legged machines that have inexplicably sprung up from beneath the ground in nearly every major city on earth.

The most critical prediction levelled against *War of the Worlds* was that it was going to be too *Spielberg*, and for the most part, the critics were right. Nearly everything in this movie is huge—huge to the point where it's almost ridiculous. The machines are huge, the explosions are huge, and the special effects are overdone to such a degree that it isn't at all unbelievable to imagine Steven Spielberg sitting back in

"The most critical prediction levelled against War of the Worlds was that it was going to be too Spielberg, and for the most part, the critics were right. Nearly everything in this movie is huge—huge to the point where it's almost ridiculous."

the studio, watching a scene and muttering, "Man, I am going to CGI the shit out of this!"

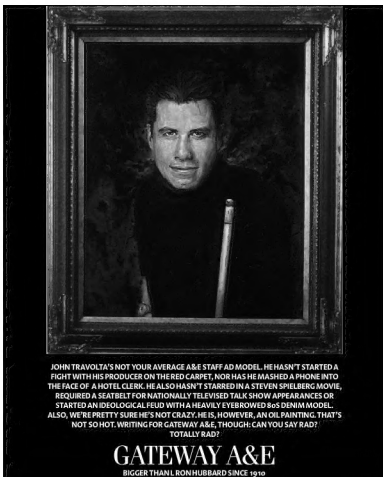
The lack of subtlety doesn't end there, unfortunately, as the acting, while competent and manageable in small doses, prove to be almost equally over-the-top: distance charmer Dakota Fanning, for instance, leaves the "cute" set at eleven for the entire movie. It's not that she and her co-stars can't act, or even that they acted poorly in the film, but after an hour and a half of yelling, screaming, and Tom Cruise delivering what you would assume must be the most important line in the film every time he opens his mouth, the significance that is apparently being striven for gets lost. When Spielberg does attempt to inject some subtlety into the film (through a trapped-in-a-cabin scene that is the most obvious of several references to the original 1953 film), he winds up creating a plodding sequence that drags to the point of boredom.

Surprisingly, despite what might seem like massive flaws, *War of the Worlds* is a fairly entertaining movie, saved mostly by the fact that the vast majority of people going to see it aren't expecting a lineup of award-worthy performances, but are anticipating

massive special effects, like no special effects put into a movie before.

Historically, one could argue that the point of the *War of the Worlds* franchise—be it the original novel, the radio play or the subsequent film versions—is to create an experience where the audience can start to believe that a Martian invasion is entirely possible. It's a surprisingly enormous task, even with all the aforementioned CGI, to create such a world: it's one thing to create a sci-fi film with spaceships and battles, but another thing altogether to create one devoid of red laser-beams and thin grey aliens—in other words an environment that feels contemporary enough to exist outside the movie's world. Sure, a few stretches of the imagination are required for *War of the Worlds*, but far less than the demands required by films such as *Independence Day*.

*War of the Worlds* manages to be exciting and engaging, even if the acting and graphics are undeniably pushed to the extreme. The film has enough to nitpick about to let anyone give it a bad review, but the movie undeniably achieves the goal that Spielberg was likely striving for: an exciting sci-fi film that would do justice to its previous, equally gripping counterparts.



JOHN TRAVOLTA'S NOT YOUR AVERAGE A&E STAFF AD MODEL. HE HASN'T STARTED A FIGHT WITH HIS PRODUCER ON THE RED CARPET, NOR HAS HE MASHED A PHONE INTO THE FACE OF A HOTEL CLERK. HE ALSO HASN'T STARRING IN A STEVEN SPIELBERG MOVIE REQUIRED A SEATBELT FOR NATIONALLY TELEVIEWED TALK SHOW APPEARANCES OR STARTED AN IDEOLOGICAL FEUD WITH A HEAVILY EYEBROWED 80s DENIM MODEL. ALSO, WE'RE PRETTY SURE HE'S NOT CRAZY, HE IS, HOWEVER, AN OIL PAINTING. THAT'S NOT SO HOT. WRITING FOR GATEWAY A&E, THOUGH: CAN YOU SAY SAD?

# GATEWAY A&E

BIGGER THAN L. RON HUBBARD SINCE 1910

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*Soundtrack—Various Artists*

*Six Feet Under: Everything Ends*

Astralworks

[www.astralwerks.com](http://www.astralwerks.com)

LEAH COLLINS

Arts &amp; Entertainment Writer

A dark sense of humour is one thing, but *Six Feet Under's* second volume of

soundtrack tunes, *Everything Ends*, takes the understated grim comedy of the show and condenses it into a track list of one too many black-yet-cheesy song titles: "Time is on My Side," is a few songs away from "(Don't Fear) the Reaper," and Coldplay's "A Rush of Blood to the Head," sounds like a bad joke considering the show's bevy of embalmed guest stars.

Luckily, you can't judge a soundtrack album by its titles. Like so many hour-long TV dramas (say, *The OC* or even *Gilmore Girls*), *Six Feet Under* has become just as well known for its weekly song choices as its family melodrama, and *Everything Ends* is a fitting epitaph to the program (this year will be its fifth and final season), with a collection that puts Nina Simone alongside indie/TX

darlings like Jem and Death Cab, and that's just uplifting enough to keep you from 40 minutes of wuss-rock shoegazing.

The newest selections (courtesy Jem, Interpol, Caesars and The Arcade Fire) are sadly hit and miss. Interpol's "Direction," in particular, is so cyclically droning that you'll wonder if the song's title is meant to be as ironic as *SFU*'s dramatic situations. The Arcade Fire exclusive "Cold Wind" is a simple and sweetly sorrowful tune, but not nearly as memorable—or joyful—as anything from the group's more funereal 2004 release. Still, there's enough atmospherics and plaintive pop melodies in store that you'll wish *SFU* could issue volume three from the TV afterlife.



# SPORTS

sports@gatewayvalberta.ca • Thursday, 7 July, 2005

## Third-year Golden Bear has a taste of Lions

ROSS PRISAKOWSKI  
Sports Writer

For most athletes, a day where they might get drafted and finally have the opportunity to turn a passion into a profession is one full of nervous energy and anxious anticipation over who will select them, or even if they'll be picked at all. For Golden Bear linebacker David Lowry, the nerves and anticipation were certainly there on the day the CFL held their entry draft—but football wasn't the sole cause of the first-team all-Canadian's angst.

"The draft was during one of my hardest exams, which was also my last exam, so I was feeling a little burnt-out at the time and I don't know if I realized the significance of being one of the few people drafted into the CFL," said Lowry, who was taken by the BC Lions in the third round, 25th overall.

"Looking back on it, it's been great. I was really excited to have the opportunity to go to their training camp and kind of see how things work at the professional level and to just be involved with the quality football program they have out there."

Lowry, who has been part of the foundation of a revived football program under head coach Jerry Priesen, understood what the opportunity to partake in the Lion's training camp this spring meant for him. The experience and knowledge he gained from the camp is something that he's eager to put to use while chasing down Canada West opponents come this fall.

"Seeing the intricacy of the game and how it's played at that level will definitely slow down the game at the CIS level for me," said Lowry. "There are some other little things I learned or picked up through watching film or watching what other guys do, how they hide moves or blitzes, that I think will definitely help me here."

As someone who has made the transition



**HIGHER LEVEL OF PLAY** Although fancy footwork can get players out of jams like this in CIS, they have to be much quicker on their feet in the CFL.

from CIS football to the CFL, Priesen thinks that having Lowry train with the Lions will help the Bears in the short term and Lowry in the long term.

"He's an outstanding player as it is, but now he knows the difference between here and going to the next level, and [what it takes to succeed] playing at that level and he knows he's not there yet. That will make him improve as a player," said Priesen of the Canada West Defensive Player

of the Year. "He'll come back and be a better football player from the experience because he knows how much improvement he's got to make."

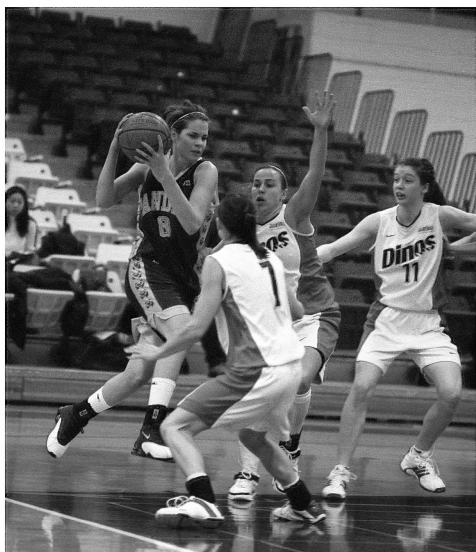
Though Lowry will be returning to the Bears this fall, it's likely this will be his final year, as he will try to bring to a conclusion both his academic and CIS career.

"The [the Lions] knew that before they drafted me I was planning to come back to

school," said Lowry. "We have a great team and have a great opportunity to complete some unfinished business on the football field, and I still have some school left that I'd like to knock out as well."

"In our minds, this team has the ability to win a national championship, and has been able to for the past few years, but we've failed at achieving that goal. We have no excuses this year. Our goal is to win a national championship."

## Pandas basketball welcomes three new members



**INCOMING** The Pandas, who just missed the playoffs last season, have recruited some help.

CHRIS O'LEARY  
Sports Editor

It's been a summer of landing some top recruits and receiving both good and bad news about injuries for Pandas' basketball coach Trix Baker—and it's only July.

As she enters her 15th year as the head coach of the Pandas basketball team, Baker is in the midst of a busy summer in which she has added three new faces to her upstart roster for the fall. Jessica Todd, a point guard from North Vancouver, will join Kelowna's Maya Tecza and Ross Shepard product Caroline Gault to provide the Pandas some size and a variety of other assets that should help the team.

**"I think she understands work ethic. I think when you come from high school, [work ethic] is a big part of it."**

**TRIX BAKER,  
PANDAS HEAD COACH**

Baker is confident that the 6'1" Tecza will be able to carry her impressive high-school numbers (20 points and 15 rebounds per game) over to the university level. "She has the potential to make an impact," Baker said. "She's a good rebounder, she's very athletic and she comes from a program where she has pushed herself really hard. I think she understands work ethic. I think when you come from high school, [work ethic] is a big part of it. She has a good ability to see the floor and communicate."

Gault will come in as a role player, but Baker is quick to point out that it isn't a slight on the

captain of the city championship-winning Ross Shep team. "She's come out and scrimmaged with us a few times, and I thought she really held her own. She doesn't look flashy; she's very fundamentally sound, but you don't look at her and think she's going to score tons of points for you and do all kinds of things," Baker said.

Unfortunately for the Pandas, Todd, a 5'7" point guard, will be unavailable when the season starts, after she tore her ACL playing soccer in May. Baker remains optimistic about Todd's status, and is hoping she'll be able to make a post-Christmas return. "She's told me her rehab is going very well," Baker said. "The impression I got from her is that it wasn't torn all the way and it didn't have a lot of swelling, so her rehab could be faster [than normal]."

One player who knows more about rehabbing injuries than possibly any other Golden Bear or Panda is the off-injured Christine Shewchuk. The former All-Canadian is currently training with hopes of regaining the starting spot that injuries forced her to give up two seasons ago. Baker said that having Shewchuk back in her lineup would make a world of difference in terms of leadership for her young team, but for the time being, she's not getting her hopes up. "If she comes back, great, we'll be that much better, but we can't count on that at this point in time," Baker said, indicating that Shewchuk's injury has left her fragile. "I'm not holding my breath [on a comeback] because she's had so much trouble with that foot; she could be out for a jog and something could happen."

The Pandas will get a chance to familiarize themselves with the new faces on their roster when they participate in an open-age tournament that will take place at Grant MacEwan from 30–31 July. Their regular season tips off in November.

## There are things more interesting than NASCAR



ANDREW  
RENFREE

I would consider myself a fairly well-rounded sports fan—and that has nothing to do with my rotund physique. Hockey and football are the meat and potatoes of my sporting diet, but I also enjoy the occasional basketball, baseball, or volleyball game to comply with the Canada Sports Guide. Hell, I'll even watch the odd soccer match when sports with more offensive flare are scarce.

I also try to make an effort to learn about sports I'm unfamiliar with. Recently, I discussed cricket with a Ugandan fellow at a house party while everyone around us was debating the best way to get drunk without a hangover in the morning. I've even tried to make sense of rugby, a sport that few people in Canada grasp. Whenever I watch a live rugby game, I'm reminded of the confusion that ensues after an interception in football, but rugby is still entertaining nonetheless.

Despite my vast appetite for sports of all kinds, the one sport I don't understand is NASCAR. Well, perhaps I should clarify that I understand NASCAR—it's quite simple, really: 40 middle-aged men race around an oval track a few hundred times and the driver who completes the race first wins. What I don't understand about this monotonous sport is why it has such a huge fan base.

"Well, perhaps I should clarify that I understand NASCAR—it's quite simple, really: 40 middle-aged men race around an oval track a few hundred times and the driver who completes the race first wins. What I don't understand about this monotonous sport is why it has such a huge fan base."

This also brings up another issue: whether NASCAR can even be considered a sport. The general rule of thumb is that if you can drink and smoke while competing, it's not a sport. Surely most of the fans stumbled out of their trailer on race morning with a Budweiser in their hand and a Marlboro between their lips, but the drivers abstain from such vices—at least during the race.

I will admit that NASCAR requires drivers to be in peak physical condition to barrel around a track at 180 miles per hour, but I still can't fathom why professional stock car racing is often considered the second most popular sport in the US behind football. Premier races such as the Daytona 500 typically have higher television ratings than prime time shows such as *American Idol* or *CSI*. There is even a show called *NASCAR Nation on the Speed Channel*, which focuses entirely on the sport of stock car racing. NASCAR's fan base is also expanding from the southern US into other states and the south now comprises less than 40 per cent of NASCAR's viewers.

However, my dislike of NASCAR does not extend to other forms of auto racing. In fact, I will likely spend three days in the mid-July sun watching the CART race at the Municipal Airport this year. Formula One is also a very entertaining form of racing, espe-

cially now that Michael Schumacher doesn't win every race. The aspect of CART and F1 that is most appealing is the fact that the courses have multiple turns and curves, and twist in many different directions. There are portions of the track that are very narrow and require skilled manoeuvres to navigate. NASCAR lacks this element entirely, and surely the drivers' arms get sore making left turns for three hours. It's clear that a sport is boring when the most exciting moment in the NASCAR season, that is, the start of the Aaron's 499 in Talladega, Alabama, when 25 cars crashed once.

It's not just me that has this opinion of NASCAR either: the next time there's a big NASCAR race, try inviting your friends and see how many responses you get. Keep in mind that I'm not responsible for any physical or verbal abuse you may suffer as a result of your generosity. The only explanation of NASCAR's popularity that I can muster is that its devout fans cannot have been exposed to other, more enjoyable sports. My suggestion to the growing throng of NASCAR fans would be to put down your Budweiser and give other sports a chance. Watch a hockey game, or if you don't want to venture too far outside your comfort zone, watch a CART or F1 race. You might find that NASCAR isn't all that it's cracked up to be.

## Cracker-Cats are a poor substitute for the Trappers

It takes more than sunny weather and ice-cold brew to lure us out to a game



ROSS  
PRUSAKOWSKI

lives to survive beyond this season. Sure, the dozens of fans that actually show up look similar to the core that supported the Trappers—old men scoring along or watching the game while simultaneously listening to the radio broadcast—but the absence of the casual fan is hard to hide.

That's because uncouth as Edmonton sports fans are, they aren't stupid. It takes more than sunny weather and an ice-cold brew to lure them out to a game. With the Trappers, and the opponents that would traipse into town to face them, fans knew they were seeing some of the majors' future stars. With the likes of Alex Rodriguez, Mark McGwire and Ken Griffey, the talent that graced the Phone Booth's field (then known as John Dewey park) was staggering. Even though they weren't household names yet, they could still put on a good show.

Unfortunately, with the Northern Leagues the show isn't quite as good, or always has to do with the play in the field. Sure, there are a few outstanding plays sprinkled throughout the game, but these are overshadowed by the horrible overthrows, mediocre pitching and bungled defensive plays.

While the end result is to make the great plays seem more incredible, high-quality baseball it ain't.

But, like most teams playing 20 000 leagues under the majors, the Cracker-Cats staff have realized the quality of baseball isn't enough to bring in the crowds. Alas, the contests off the turf aren't enough to make up for the lacklustre ball. The recycled and reconfigured take-offs of *Let's make a Deal* and *The Newlywed Game* are worth a chuckle or two—especially when a contestant forgets the date of their anniversary—but are hardly compelling reasons to shell out for a seat.

It will take more than a few years of relative obscurity—of being relegated to the back of the sports pages with NASCAR and soccer—until the Cracker-Cats will be a success. By then, the pain over the loss of AAA ball should have dulled in the hearts of fans and the actual difference in the skill between the leagues will be long forgotten. Until then, however, Edmonton's baseball fans need only watch a few innings worth until they hit their heads in frustration when the realization of what they're watching sinks in.

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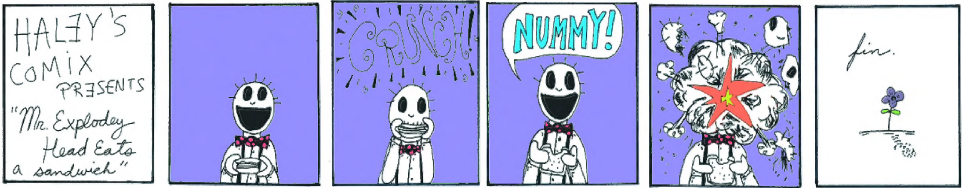
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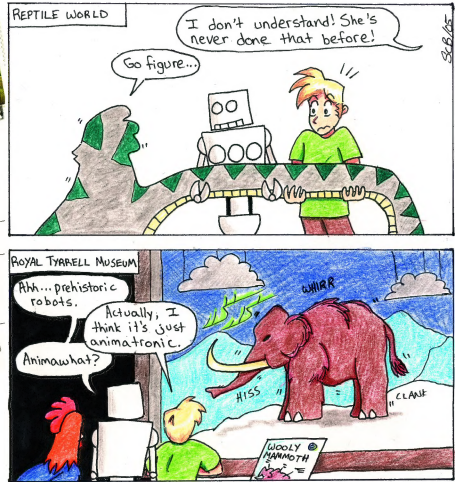
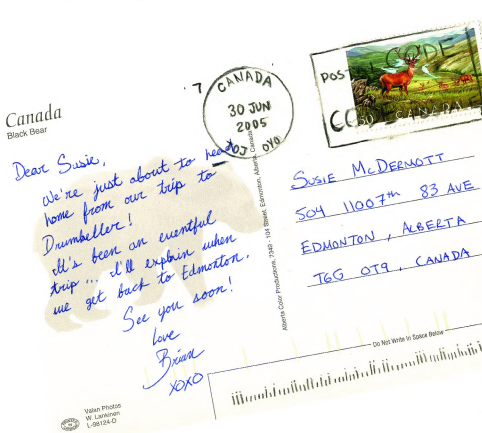
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